

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 11857 291646Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 /021 W
-----090795 301143Z /10

R 290837Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9194

UNCLAS TOKYO 11857

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, JA
SUBJECT: TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE: STATUS REPORT ON
TSG: AUTOMOBILE STUDY AND JAPANESE STANDARDS

REF: TOKYO 11036

1. SUMMARY: ECMIN HAS MET INFORMALLY WITH MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, (MOT) ROAD TRANSPORT DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO DISCUSS NEED TO REDUCE BILATERAL TRADE IMBALANCE AND TO REQUEST MOT'S COOPERATION IN FACILITATING IMPORTS. INDUSTRY/ACCJ AND EMBASSY REP WILL NOW MEET WITH WORKING LEVEL TO FOLLOW-UP. MOT INSPECTORS WILL CONDUCT WITNESS TESTING OF 1979 U.S. MODELS IN U.S. FROM AUGUST 7. EMBASSY ALSO SENDING FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO MOT INQUIRING WHETHER NOTARY PUBLIC CERTIFICATION IS ACCEPTABLE AUTHENTICATION OF DATE OF MANUFACTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ATTEMPT TO DEFUSE CONFRONTATIONAL ATMOSPHERE THAT HAD DEVELOPED BETWEEN U.S. SIDE OF TRADE STUDY GROUP AND MOT, ECMIN MET JUNE 22 WITH MOT ROAD TRANSPORT DIR-GEN NAKAMURA FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION OF U.S.-JAPAN TRADE RELATIONS AND NEED TO REDUCE U.S./JAPAN TRADE IMBALANCE. ECMIN NOTED THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE WITH MOT'S COOPERATION OVER LAST TWO YEARS; E.G., MOT'S CONDUCTING "WITNESS TESTING" IN U.S. ON MODELS BOUND FOR JAPAN, MENTIONED THAT CERTAIN PROBLEMS CONTINUED TO EXIST AND SAID THAT THE U.S. MANUFACTURERS WOULD LIKE TO CALL ON

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NAKAMURA'S STAFF SHORTLY TO DISCUSS DIRECTLY HOW THESE PROBLEMS MIGHT BE SOLVED. NAKAMURA ACKNOWLEDGED HIS BUREAU'S DESIRE "TO COOPERATE".

3. PER NORMAL SUMMER TURNOVERS, NAKAMURA WILL SHORTLY TRANSFER TO ANOTHER POSITION. WE PLAN TO REPLAY SCENE WITH NAKAMURA'S SUCCESSOR BUT SINCE MUCH OF NAKAMURA'S

STAFF, INCLUDING DEP. DIR-GEN INUMARU AND ENGINEERING
DIV DIR NIWA WERE PRESENT OUR EFFORTS MAY BEAR SOME
FRUIT. ACCJ REP ON TSG IS NOW CANVASSING U.S. MANUFACTURERS
AS TO WHEN THEY WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH MOT WORKING LEVEL
AND EMBASSY WILL THEN ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENT.

4. DURING DISCUSSION, NAKAMURA CONFIRMED THAT MOT IN-
SPECTORS WILL CARRY OUT "WITNESS TESTING" OF 1979 U.S.
MODELS IN U.S. AT BIG THREE'S FACILITIES BEGINNING
AUGUST 7. EXACT SCHEDULE AND DECISION AS TO WHICH IN-
SPECTORS FROM MITAKA FACILITY WILL GO IS YET TO BE
SETTLED. ALTHOUGH U.S. WITNESS TESTING HAS BEEN "ON
TRACK" FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, FORMAL CONFIRMATION WAS
WELCOME SINCE MOT HAD NEVER FORMALLY RESPONDED TO ECMIN/
NAKAMURA LETTER OF DECEMBER 14, 1977 ON SUBJECT. ECMIN
TOLD NAKAMURA THAT EMB OFF MEYERS WOULD BE AT THE STATE
DEPARTMENT'S JAPAN DESK FROM AUGUST 1 AND WOULD BE
PLEASED TO ASSIST THE INSPECTING GROUP IF THEY RUN INTO
ANY DIFFICULTY.

5. EMBASSY ALSO NOW PLANS TO FOLLOW-UP ON EARLIER
BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS RE AUTO STANDARDS BY SENDING
FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO OURS OF MARCH 13 TO ENGINEERING
DIV DIR NIWA INQUIRING WHETHER U.S. NOTARY PUBLIC
CERTIFICATION OF THE DATE OF MANUFACTURE OF A VEHICLE
IS ACCEPTABLE AUTHENTICATION OF SAME.
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6. COMMENT: POINT OF TIME MAY BE APPROACHING WHEN
U.S. SIDE MUST LINK AUTO IMPORT BARRIERS IDENTIFIED
BY TSG STUDY WITH OUR PREVIOUS EFFORTS TO REDUCE AUTO
SAFETY AND EMISSION STANDARD BARRIERS THROUGH GOVERNMENT/
TO/GOVERNMENT BILATERAL TALKS. SEE SEPTTEL FOR DISCUSSION
OF COMMODITY TAX ISSUES ALSO RAISED IN TSG STUDY.
MANSFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE, REPORTS, STANDARDS, COMMITTEES, AUTOMOBILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TOKYO11857
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780270-0619
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978066/aaaaaeqg.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c0583289-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TOKYO 11036
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2351976
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE: STATUS REPORT ON TSG: AUTOMOBILE STUDY AND JAPANESE STANDARDS
TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c0583289-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014